



Town of Halfmoon
2015 Zoning Review Committee
Halfmoon Town Hall
7:00 P.M.
January 15, 2015

Summary Meeting Notes

*** This was a joint meeting with the Halfmoon Business & Economic Development Committee ***

Attendance: Committee Members (voting): Fred Bahr, Eli Taub, Brenda LaMere, Wayne Allen;
Committee Members (non-voting): Jim Bold, Jason Dell; Jeff Burdyl; Town Board/Staff: Paul Hotaling, John Wasielewski, Daphne Jordan, Rich Harris, Mike Bianchino. (Also in attendance were members of the Halfmoon Business & Economic Development Committee).

D.Jordan introduced the Business & Economic Development Committee (BEDC); she discussed the Committee's purpose, which is to promote sales tax revenue growth by finding opportunities to expand the tax base and business development; she stated that sales tax and mortgage recording tax are two critical revenue streams for the Town and that the Town recognizes that home building will not continue forever; she added that there are important open spaces that we want to preserve; she stated that promoting sales tax growth and small business/economic development is a priority of the committee and that the focus of the BEDC has been on looking for growth opportunities more so than the Zoning Review Committee (ZRC); she discussed the history of the BEDC (met approx. 7 times/year; focused first year on helping existing business, conducting a survey, developing and enacting sign ordinance changes and trying to create a business favorable environment through smart growth); she added that they BEDC then began looking at re-zoning opportunities in Town, with an eye towards growth.

Ms. Nadine Shaldock, BEDC member, reviewed the tour conducted with Dennis Brobston, from Saratoga Economic Development Corp., in December; D.Brobston, a BEDC member, stated that goals have been to keep business in Town or at a new site in Halfmoon; discussed that if seeking light industrial/ commercial development, utilities, including water, sewer, electricity, natural gas, are critical and companies want easy development (not lots of hurdles); he added companies want a clean process and want to know how long the approval and development process will be; he discussed PDDs, and that they have been used well in Town, with much public benefit provided, but have gotten expensive and unrealistic in some cases; he recommended that the Town needed to say what type of development it wants and what it doesn't want; he stated manufacturing land in Halfmoon has deteriorated, particularly in Rts. 4/32 area (wetlands grown, drainage issues increased, related regulations have changed making it more difficult to develop).

W.Allen added that companies want to move where the good schools are located, good infrastructure, quality of life; he added those factors need to be added to the equation of what attracts companies. D.Brobston concurred.

J.Burdyl asked about utility companies and how they have been to work with. D. Brobston stated power companies can be tough; NYSEG is better than National Grid in communicating and discussing issues causing delays in service.

P.Hotaling stated that in most cases, developers are also causing the delays, wasting time by not adhering to Town rules or completing punch lists for road dedication; Town staff have to keep going back to get them to finish items; R. Harris added that in almost every development, developers do not complete items they are required to complete pursuant to Town regulations or approvals and the process is delayed.

D.Jordan asked to turn attention back to the edited Zoning Map that was distributed, which shows five areas where the BEDC proposes amendments (Areas 1 - 5); Area 5 - rezone to residential/agriculture (from LI-C), due to wetlands and other development constraints; Area 3 - J.Burdyl discussed ZRC's past discussions on a waterfront overlay zone.

E.Taub stated whole Town should be looked at comprehensively and Town needs to put some money towards an analysis of whether these proposals and changes make sense.

Peter Bardunias, Southern Saratoga Chamber of Commerce and BEDC committee member, stated that Rt. 4/32 ideal spot for commercial and industrial development, so that it helps diffuse traffic and jobs from the more developed areas of Town.

D.Brobston stated that if the Town has a spot it wants growth and development to occur, pick it and focus on it.

General discussion on whether Town is approaching full build out, finite nature of land and need to redevelop built out areas.

W.Allen feels highways are crumbling and need to focus on a revenue source to maintain infrastructure; general discussion on need for revenue; general agreement that this is an important issue for the Town's future and growth; D.Jordan discussed lack of Town highway tax and potential for dedicated highway fund from PDD public benefits, but that is for the future and dependent upon PDDs.

P.Bardunias reviewed rest of edited Zoning Map and each proposed zone.

Group agreed need to meet again in 60-90 days after each committee has an opportunity to further discuss issues raised at the meeting .

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM. Next meeting of the ZRC will be Thursday, February 19, 2015 at 7:00 PM.